General Assembly

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Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 119 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/56/583/Add.2)*]

56/168. Comprehensive and integral international convention to promote and protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the obligations contained in the relevant human rights instruments,

Reaffirming also that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[1] proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set out therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

Recalling its resolutions 37/52 of 3 December 1982, by which it adopted the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons,[2] 48/96 of 20 December 1993, by which it adopted the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, and 54/121 of 17 December 1999,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/10 of 27 July 2000 on further promotion of equalization of opportunities by, for and with persons with disabilities, as well as other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the functional commissions of the Council,

Reaffirming the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits and their respective follow-up reviews, in particular as they pertain to the promotion of the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities on an equal and participatory basis,

Noting with satisfaction that the Standard Rules play an important role in influencing the promotion, formulation and evaluation of policies, plans, programmes and actions at the national, regional and international levels to further the equalization of opportunities by, for and with persons with disabilities,

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] A/37/351/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex, sect. VIII, recommendation I (IV).

Recognizing that, despite different efforts made to increase cooperation and integration and increasing awareness of and sensitivity to disability issues since the adoption of the World Programme of Action by Governments, bodies and relevant organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, these efforts have not been sufficient to promote full and effective participation by and opportunities for persons with disabilities in economic, social, cultural and political life,

Encouraged by the increasing interest of the international community in the promotion and protection of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities in the world under a comprehensive and integral approach,

Deeply concerned about the disadvantaged and vulnerable situation faced by 600 million persons with disabilities around the world, and conscious of the need to advance in the elaboration of an international instrument,

Looking forward to the final reports of the Special Rapporteur on disability of the Commission for Social Development to be presented to that Commission, and also the outcome of the study currently being undertaken pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/51 of 25 April 2000[3] on the adequacy of instruments in respect of the protection and monitoring of the human rights of persons with disabilities,

Taking into account the recommendation of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban, South Africa, from 31 August to 8 September 2001, to the General Assembly to consider elaborating a comprehensive and integral international convention to promote and protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, including special provisions that address the discriminatory practices and treatment that affect them,[4]

1. *Decides* to establish an Ad Hoc Committee, open to the participation of all Member States and observers of the United Nations, to consider proposals for a comprehensive and integral international convention to promote and protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, based on the holistic approach in the work done in the fields of social development, human rights and non-discrimination and taking into account the recommendations of the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission for Social Development;

2. *Also decides* that, prior to the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly the Ad Hoc Committee shall hold at least one meeting of a duration of ten working days;

3. *Invites* States, relevant bodies and organizations of the United Nations system, including relevant human rights treaty bodies, the regional commissions, the Special Rapporteur on disability of the Commission for Social Development, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with an interest in the matter to make contributions to the work entrusted to the Ad Hoc Committee, based on the practice of the United Nations;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General, with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Division for Social

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[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 3* and corrigendum (E/2000/23 and Corr.1), chap. II, sect. A.

[4] See A/CONF.189/12, chap. I, para. 180.

Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, to submit to the Ad Hoc Committee prior to its first session a compilation of existing international legal instruments, documents and programmes which directly or indirectly address the situation of persons with disabilities, including, inter alia, those of conferences, summits, meetings or international or regional seminars convened by the United Nations and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations;

5. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to provide the Ad Hoc Committee with the outcome of the study undertaken pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/51 and the final reports that will be presented by the Special Rapporteur on disability of the Commission for Social Development to that Commission;

6. *Calls upon* States, in cooperation with regional commissions, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Division for Social Policy and Development and the Special Rapporteur on disability of the Commission for Social Development, to hold regional meetings or seminars to contribute to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee by making recommendations regarding the content and practical measures that should be considered in the international convention;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide the Ad Hoc Committee with the facilities necessary for the performance of its work;

8. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the progress made by the Ad Hoc Committee.

88th plenary meeting
19 December 2001